

BIRDS IN WINTER

Institute: Szivárvány Kindergarten

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Age of the children: 5–6 years

Period for implementation: 08. 01. 2018 – 12. 01. 2018



Project diary

The project focuses on birds. The children first attended a bird watch in the Nature Protection Area in Pusztaszer which provided wide knowledge about the life of our birds in winter. This was followed by mathematics, language, music, science and PE activities. Through these activities the children got to know the habitat of birds, their attention was drawn to the characteristics of birds and to their appearance.

Project objectives

- Discovering the local avifauna and natural treasures over several days. Observing the flora and fauna of the winter forest, collecting its treasures.
- Setting up playful situations, experiments, collecting experiences in the natural environment and in other locations using experiential education.
- Creating ground for fidelity to our immediate environment and provincialist approach by getting to know our natural and built values.
- Forming the environmental awareness in the families through children.
- Providing opportunity for an independent discovery of environmental problems, finding solutions, and raising interest about the environment and nature.
- Developing the basic components of scientific knowledge acquisition (e.g. observation, wording and recording experiences) and scientific thinking (e.g. comparisons, recognition of analogies and relationships, systematization, causative thinking).
- Developing creativity.

Implementation of the project

Activity 1

Form of activity: Active cognition of the surrounding world. A trip to the Nature Protection Area in Pusztaszer for bird watching. Observation of the birds at the lake, on the field and in the forest with the naked eye and binoculars.

Objectives

1. Getting to know the winter bird protection in natural environment, in the protected area, and on the birdwatch.
2. Giving an opportunity for the children to discover environmental problems for themselves, to search for solutions, and raising interest about the environment.
3. Getting to know the birds that come from the north, their names (cranes, cross-billed, bullfinch), gaining knowledge about their protection and lifestyle, gaining experience.
4. Conscious animal protection
5. Evolving a positive emotional attitude, love and respect for nature.
6. Observing flora and fauna in the winter forest.
7. Bonding to the homeland including Pusztaszer and Kistelek
3. Placement of the „gifts” for birds (sunflower seeds, walnut meat).
4. Compliance with the rules of visiting nature: “We are only guests in nature”, and “listening” to the sounds of silence.
5. Usage of the birdwatch posts, observation of nearby birds, their names, description of their appearances, getting to know their lifestyle (cranes, Tom-tits, Great Tits blackbirds).
6. Developing focused attention, being more and more aware of what we see, smell, hear or imagine.
7. Sharpening sensory organs in nature, developing all 5 sensory skills.
8. Directed observation of mathematics content: size of birds, birds living in couples, counting them, comparing the number of birds in birdwatch stations.
9. Discovery of correlations, reinforcement of spontaneous recognition.
10. Imitating the moves of birds

Tasks

1. Choosing and checking the location, talking to the fowlers about the programmes with the children.
2. Observing nature: Is nature sleeping? Observing and talking about the obvious changes in the weather (plants, animal footprints in the snow, looking at animal feeders).

Developing skills

1. Facilitation of the development of cognitive functions
 - Developing cognitive thinking by initiating problem-situations.
 - Developing sensory and perception skills: the sound of birds (hearing), finding them (seeing), collecting feathers (touching), their smell.
 - Developing scope, length and depth of attention: the colour and shape of the birds on the birdwatch stations.
 - Developing thinking: finding differences and similarities during the comparison of birds.
 - Wording of thoughts – verbal development.
 - Developing immutability of shape and form by putting round bird schemes.
2. Facilitation of the development of social skills
 - Cooperation with other children on the birdwatch
3. Evolving healthy lifestyle
 - A series of outdoor activities that include moving
4. Mother tongue education
 - Wording of experiences
 - Developing active and passive vocabulary
 - Poems and rhymes: Don't ruin nests ...; We have been birds...; Birds by Nemes-Nagy Ágnes; The forest must be far away...

The process

- Tale: reading the tale called The Tit Diary
- Talking about the work of the father who is the assistant of the world known nature photographer Bence Máté, thereby raising the enthusiasm of the children. Bence Máté was awarded the

- Wildlife Photographer of the Year in 2010 which is considered to be the Oscar Award in nature photography (<https://matebence.hu/?lang=en>). Since then he has received several other prizes for his photographs. He established several birdwatch stations in Pusztaszer where children can observe birds very close from behind a special glass wall.
- Raised question: Let's see what birds overwinter in our country; let's visit the workplace of the father.
- Trip to the Nature Protection Area in Pusztaszer.
- Visiting the birdwatch stations and trying them, gaining experience on bird protection (feeding birds, taking photographs and observing their everyday life).
- Calling the children's attention to preserving the natural and built environment.
- Observation of the flora and fauna of the winter forest with the naked eye, with binoculars and with magnifiers. Discovery of traces, footprints and their identification.
- Presentation of a dried-out tree as a habitat.
- Game: Little bird, give a sound!; the game called My bird... and free playing around.

Organization

- Meeting and discussion with the workers and representatives of the Nature Protection Area. Visiting the Nature Protection Area in Pusztaszer. Organizing the trip.
- Involving parents into the preparations.
- Collecting pictures, seeds and pinecones.



Activity 2

Form: Evocation and engraftment of experiences:

Objectives

1. Remembering the atmosphere and experiences of the trip on the previous day embedded into a tale frame.
2. Cooperative learning – usage of the mosaic method.
3. Developing social skills: developing cooperation, paying attention to each other, tolerance, and peer-learning.

Tasks

1. Developing thinking by problem solving. Making the children use thinking skills and guiding them to find the correct solution. Letting them discover connections, reinforcing spontaneous recognition.
2. Using questions that foster thinking:
How will we know if we are right? What's the cause of ...?; How could we solve it?; What would happen if there were no birds at all?;
3. Developing memory and attention by calling up memories.
4. Accomplishing differentiated and personalized development.

Development of skills

1. Developing cognitive skills (comparisons, cause and effect correlation, generalization, concretion and so on) discovery of connections
2. Developing sensory and perception skills
3. Helping to highlight mathematics content: quantity relations (more, less, same), practice of counting
4. Developing large movement by dancing and dramatic games
5. Emotional and community development: education for nature protection
6. Developing social skills by cooperative learning

The process

- Motivation, establishing psychic condition: listening to the song called The Forest from the CD The Birds by Vilmos Gryllus; relaxation listening to the sounds of several birds.
- Dramatic games embedded into a tale frame and solving tasks connected to birds. Game: Turning into birds; Saving migratory birds: feeding and set fire, warming up by the fire. Game with mathematics content: Take out as many seeds (plastic caps) from the basket, as many times I clap my hands, stomp my foot, and the exact colour I say. Counting practice: more, less, the same amount, colours practice.
- Dancing, seven motifs, imitating movement, dancing around: 1. Birds hatch from their eggs; 2. Birds try their wings; 3. They peck seeds; 4. Birds go up; 5. They build nests; 6. Birds dance; 7. They go to sleep.
- Cooperative activities, mosaic learning:

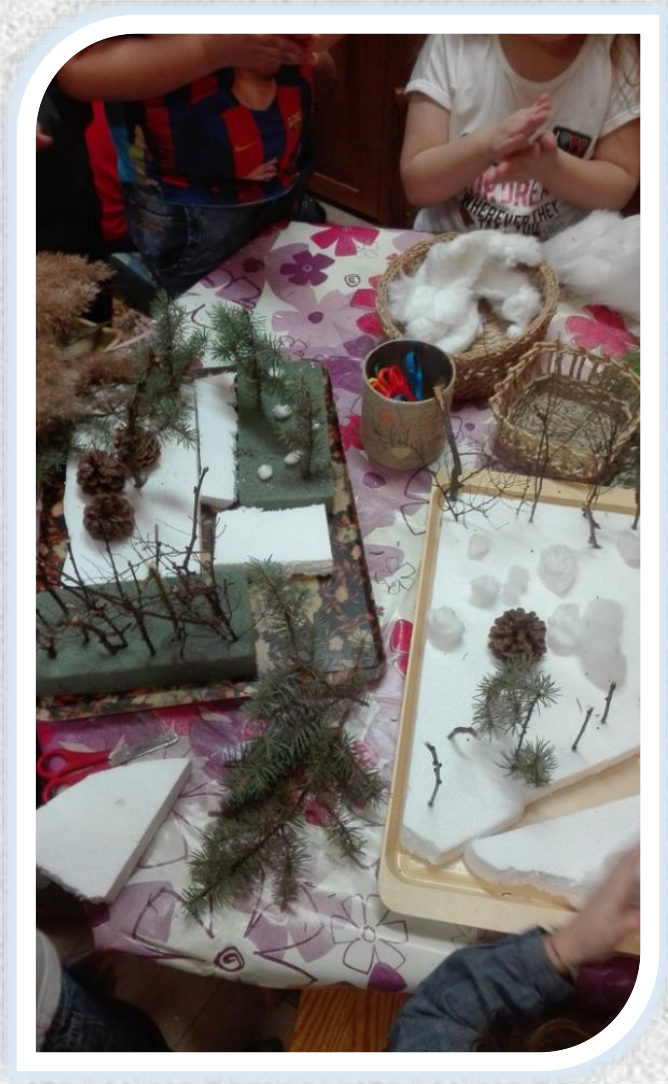
We cover the three topics in three units by separate child activities. Topics:

- a) Creating posters about birds with the title: Feed the birds! After separating and cutting out the pictures of migratory birds and those that overwinter here, we stick the pictures on the poster.
- b) Creating a winter landscape on a sand table from twigs (shaping the wood), cotton balls (as snow) and paper bird models (painting and placing them in the landscape)
- c) A woodworker-built birdfeeder with the help of the children made of wooden boards.
Mood closure: Story telling: The wings of Lotilko, folk tale.

Organization:

- Collecting work: feathers, pictures of migratory and overwintering birds
- Preparing equipment (plastic caps, pegs, pictures of birds, glue, big cardboards, wooden boards, nails, hammers, CDs).
- Using a bird puppet, application of dramatic games in order to keep playfulness and attention
- Resetting the room and forming the place for the work.





Activity 3

Form: Drawing, painting and plasticine work

Objectives

1. Practicing plasticine work: rounding, rolling and putting it together into a bird form. Extra materials: feathers and berries (for the eyes)
2. Pleasing the birds.
3. Eye-hand coordination development, practicing the usage of scissors, developing aesthetic sense.
4. Forming nature-aware approach: recycling and using plastic bottles, pointing out to the importance of selective waste collection.
5. Developing social skills: educating for cooperation, sticking to the rules of the community

Tasks

1. Making plasticine birds, making bird food, placing out a birdfeeder

Developing skills

1. Developing fine motor skills, and eye-hand coordination
2. Developing cognitive functions: developing scope, length and depth of attention by active participation in the activities
3. Observing mathematics content (features, quantities, correlations): features of a plasticine ball, rounding, flattening, the number of the parts of a shape, the size of the

wooden boards, how many bird foods have we made, the number of the nails hammered into the wood.

4. Sensory development: developing eye-hand coordination and colour awareness

The process

1. Making plasticine birds. Browsing through bird photography books (The Invisible Wildlife Photographer by Bence Máté)
2. Preparing bird food for our birds, taking them out to the chestnut tree, placing them out onto the trees in the kindergarten yard and filling the birdfeeders that were made.
3. Colouring in colouring sheets about birds, cutting them out and posting them to the decoration trees in the group rooms.
4. Making birdfeeders from plastic bottles and placing them in the yard.
5. Mood closure: dancing to the song Birdfeeder by Vilmos Gryllus

Organization

Supplying equipment and materials (pinecones, plasticine, berries, feathers, scissors, gelatine, seeds, printing colouring pictures, sharpening coloured pencils, glue).

Collecting pinecones in the forest and at home.

Cooking a hard jelly made from gelatine and mixing it with the seeds.



Activity 4

Form I: Music, singing game, child dance

Objectives: learning new songs and practicing them (from the CD Musical Birdhouse, The Birdfeeder song, song about the sparrow and the woodpecker); Developing musical skills and personality

Tasks

1. Musical skills development: developing rhythmic skills; practising the steady beat; rhythm echo game imitating the knocking sound of the woodpecker's beak. Raising awareness of silent-loud pair through some musical motifs.
2. Developing auditory perception: developing the ability to differentiate between several tones by recognizing and imitating sounds of known birds. Recognizing the voices of the other children in the group and naming the owner.

Game: Organizing a Bird Concert

Developing skills

1. Developing memory through the learnt musical games. Developing concentration and increasing attention
2. Developing large movement and balancing skills by walking, dropping down, running, spinning.
3. Connecting fine motor skills with verbality through dancing games.
4. Developing the sense of the steady beat, imitating the knocking sound of some birds.
5. Developing rhythmic skills: Rhythm echo game with paying attention to the knocking sound. Developing the childhood rhythm improvisation

6. Developing hearing: practicing the silent-loud concept with an echo game.
7. Development: steps in round games to the left and to the right, forwards-backwards, walking on tip-toe: developing spatial orientation.

The process

- Motivation
- The game framework: Let's imagine that we walk to the winter forest and the winter field and visit the birds that live there. Nursery rhymes, poems and songs.
- Presentation of the new song about birds, and practice. Creating a dance to the song individually – supporting creativity.
- Rhythm-echo game in the forest: Imitating the knocking sound of the birds: we got a message from the birds, let's answer them.
- Discussing rules: developing auditory perception: practicing the silent-loud concept through the song Woodpecker knocks on the dry bark...
- Dancing the magic dance with a motif
- Developing the recognition of the different tones of human voices: recognizing the voices of each other.
- Bird Concert. Developing musical improvisation, rhythm practice
- Mood closure: Listening to music, dancing

Organization

Setting the group room.

Form II: Library visit. Taking a walk to the library of Kistelek and observing the owls that live in the yard of the library. Browsing and borrowing books about birds.

Objectives

1. Getting to know how to use a library, and its rules
2. Getting to know the names of the overwintering birds, their pictures, lifestyles, migratory birds that come to us for the winter, their names, pictures and migratory lifestyles.

Our overwintering birds: wren, sparrow, woodpecker, Tom-tit, blackbird, Aegithalos, Great Tit

Tasks:

Browsing books about birds and borrowing them from the library for the group

Listening to the story and presentation of the librarian, asking questions.

Developing skills

Making children be able to comply with the communication rules of the library

The process

- Observing the owls of the library
- Visiting the library

Organization

Coordination with the library. Choosing books.





Activity 5

Form: Bird gymnastics

Objectives

1. Imitating the moves of birds, experience of the imitation of movements, developing cooperative skills through games

Tasks

1. Satisfying a basic need for children: moving and happiness
2. Complying with rules and forming of social behaviour
3. Imitating the moves of birds

Skills development

1. Developing physical abilities: strength, resistance, muscles, speed, muscle detection.
2. Strengthening the arches of the feet, gymnastics for fallen
3. Developing fine motor skills and eye-hand coordination
4. Developing body schemes and spatial orientation
5. Mathematics content: counting, correlations (more, less, same), practising comparisons through movement activities

The process

- Running with a task: Bird Tag ...; The eagle and the spiders tag game.
- Walking with a task: Sparrow walking, Walking with knees up
- Exercises: Birdly owl gymnastics, Imitator, playful practice
- Main exercise: Birds in the winter forest
- Game: Seed collector... Who can collect more seeds with their toes into their nests?

Organization

Setting the gym.

Closure of the project

Organizing an exhibition from the creations that were made during the project: birdfeeders, bird food, drawings of birds, colouring ins, posters, paintings, puzzles and memory cards.



Reflections

The project was a great opportunity for children to observe nature consciously. It was good to see the children's released behaviour, as we got off the bus, and were going towards the birdwatches and the children started to really look, to use their binoculars and to marvel at nature. They were running forward happily and couldn't wait to get to the birdwatches. Getting near the lake we should have kept silent, but we couldn't always achieve this goal. So, they experienced that if they want to see the birds they must keep quiet, otherwise the birds fly away. After all, this trip was a great experience not only for the children but for their teachers as well. We marvelled at the built bird nests and the animals of the forest, too. The children noticed several birds. We have seen cranes that came from Scandinavia to our country, but there were roe deer as well. In the town library we could observe owls in the yard. Eight owls live there on the trees. Watching the living nature was a good opportunity to recite nursery rhymes, songs and poems about birds, to listen to music connected to birds and to create things like a birdfeeder, a bird nest or making birds from plasticine. Children had fun they were talking about a visit to Pusztaszer in spring to see the farm where they can meet homestead animals. The children also want to see the ground-squirrels who have built a whole network of tunnels under the area, as well as visit the birds that move into the nests.